

# Connecticut Clippings

Volume 46, No 1

March 2012

## 2011 DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Distinguished Member of the Year Award is given to a member who has demonstrated outstanding contributions to the advancement of the game and business of golf. Our recipient represents our association in a professional, articulate manner in his work with both the golf and government communities and got involved on our Board of Directors upon becoming a Superintendent.

Golf was not a part of his early life growing up in Bristol, RI where he helped his father in the landscape business. When he attended the University of Rhode Island, he met Dr. Skogley during his sophomore year which influenced him to change his major and Scott graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Golf Course Management. He worked at Siwanoy CC in NY and the Rhode Island CC on his way to becoming a Superintendent and took his first Superintendent position in 1984 at Pautipaug CC in Baltic, CT. Scott was elected to the Board of Directors and served as S & R and Membership Chairman as well Treasurer. In 1990 he moved to Simsbury and took over as Superintendent at Tower Ridge CC.

When the Arnold Palmer Group assumed management of the course, Scott quickly rose through the ranks to Regional Director. With the 2004 US Women's Open scheduled to take place

at the Orchards GC in South Hadley, MA. In 2001 Scott was brought in to prepare the course for the tournament. But before the tournament arrived, the position of Superintendent at the Course at Yale became available in 2003 and Scott couldn't resist the chance to maintain the course he had fallen in love with the first time he played it in 1986. Since becoming the Superintendent at the Course at Yale, Scott has won the 2006 Superintendent of the Year Award from Superintendent Magazine, brought the Course at Yale to the GolfWeek rank of #1 University Golf Course and was elected to the Board of Directors again. He currently serves as the Government Relations Chairperson and represents our association on the Tri-State committee, CTECT and, along with John Garcia and Mike Dugan, in the Stream Flow Regulations the DEEP and State of Connecticut have focused on in the past two years.

Scott lives in Simsbury with his wife of 26 years, Meg. Their son, Bennett, is a senior at the University of South Carolina. Life does come around full circle, for in his free time, Scott enjoys landscaping his home as well as reading and time with his family.

It was a pleasure to introduce Scott Ramsay as our Distinguished Member of the Year for 2011.



Scott Ramsay , CGCS

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Mark Mansur

## The President's Message

environmental legislation is proposed compromising our employment. Opportunity has never been more available to the CAGCS membership, than in 2012.

As the winter comes to a close with a thud, we find ourselves wrapping our thoughts around what a snow less winter and recent warm temperatures will mean when it comes to turf management in 2012. Thus, there are many opportunities that are presented to us through our commercial member's seminars. These educational forums allow us to raise and ask questions regarding a not so typical off season for golf course management. Please take advantage of these educational opportunities.

Of course, what would be a golf season in Connecticut be without our environmental adversaries pumping out anti-pesticide legislation. This

is an awesome opportunity to see how our government operates first hand by becoming involved in testimony regarding different legislative issues. It also gives me the opportunity to personally thank John Garcia, Scott Ramsay, CGCS and Rob Giampetro, CGCS for their recent testimony in Hartford regarding a phosphorous ban in fertilizers. Their testimonial input helped to maintain an exemption status for golf courses concerning the use of phosphorus. However, it appears that there will be more environmental legislation coming down the pipeline and we need your help as environmental stewards.

Opportunity is a chance for progress or advancement, but in order to do so, we all need to get involved!

Cheers to a great golf season in 2012!

-Mark

**Op-por-tu-ni-ty** – noun 1. a favorable or advantageous circumstance or combination of circumstances. 2. a favorable or suitable occasion or time. 3. a chance for progress or advancement.

Whether it's a favorable circumstance or combination of circumstances like a snow free winter followed by recent record breaking warm temperatures; a suitable occasion or time with regional educational opportunities all around us; or a chance for progress or advancement by testifying at the State Capital as endless

Connecticut Clippings is an official publication of the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents

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### CAGCS WINTER SEMINAR 2012

The CAGCS Winter Seminar was held at the Mystic Marriott for the first time on January 17, 2012. The day was filled with great speakers presenting valuable information on a wide variety of topics.

CAGCS welcomed Dr. John Kaminski back to Connecticut to start the morning by presenting "Why Should I Use Social Media?". He discussed the proper uses of Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, including how to use social media to communicate with golfers. He also focused on the value of being able to use social media to show golfers how you've solved problems you discovered before they even got out of bed in the morning. That is, it is a powerful tool to get the credit for the job you are already doing.

Our next speaker was Dr. Frank Wong presenting "The Biology and Management of Waitea Patch." (Way-Tee-Uh) This is a new, low nitrogen disease of cool season putting greens. The disease is caused by a basidiomycete fungus, which is different from Rhizoctonia and needs to be managed differently from brown patch. Waitea Patch is stress related and will first develop in drier areas of greens.

Dr. John Inguagiato then provided an update on the turfgrass research being done at UCONN. Some of the highlights included:

- Cultivation and manganese application effects on summer patch, and the severity in compacted and non-compacted turfgrass areas
- The impact of fairway topdressing on soil physical properties, turfgrass quality disease severity, and earthworm castings

### SMARTPHONE APP'S AND THE GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT

The popularity and range of smartphones has exploded in the last few years, but believe it or not, smartphones first appeared nearly 20 years ago in 1992. (although they were not called smartphones back then). Let's take a look at the history of the smartphone and see what phones like the Blackberry, Android and I-Phone developed from.

The first smartphone was developed by IBM in 1992 and was called the IBM Simon. It had limited features and the only applications were a calendar, address book, clock, calculator and note pad. It was about the size of a brick and weighed like one also. Battery life was very limited. It cost \$899.00.

In 1996 Nokia released "The Communicator", which was the first lightweight palm style computer

All of the updates that were presented and more will be on display at UCONN's Field Day on July 17, 2012.

Then right before lunch, Michael Dugan, our Lobbyist, provided an update on stream flow standards, which we collectively fought this past year. Golf courses are exempt from the regulation, provided that they use Best Management Practices established by the DEEP and CAGCS years ago. Mr. Dugan also expressed that we should be building a broader and more engaged coalition to fight against regulations that would negatively affect our industry.

After Lunch, Adam Moeller, USGA Agronomist for the Northeast Region, gave a talk on "Putting Green Drainage and Microclimates: Key Factors for Good Conditions." He emphasized how drainage has the most important impact in the game of golf, with good surface drainage being the first step in drainage. Proper aeration and plus topdressing with sand between .5 - 1mm sand is the best way to help in surface drainage, and tree management on the course is also important. Mr. Moeller stated that, "Trees are optional to the game of golf, not grass." The more we can educate all golfers on why trees and turf just do not work well together, the better off we will be.

To finish the talks for the day, Dr. John Kaminski gave a talk on "Thatch Collapse:

An Emerging Problem on Putting Greens." Thatch Collapse has occurred globally and starts out looking like Fairy Ring. It occurs in the Spring and Fall when temperatures are between 55 and 65 degrees. A fungicide application can be made and watered into the thatch to help with the Thatch Collapse. Then topdressing will maintain a smooth surface with help in the recovery. Dr. Kaminski asked if anyone believes they might have Thatch Collapse, you should send him a picture of it through social media or email to help him with his research of this disease.

CAGCS presented Executive Secretary Mary Jo Kennedy with a token of appreciation for her 10 years of service to our association.

CAGCS would like to thank our speakers for traveling to spend the day with us and sharing their experiences and research. We would also like to thank Les Kennedy, Jr., CGCS and Scott Ramsay, CGCS for chairing the two sessions and to all of our commercial sponsors who purchased tables for the event, helping make our 2012 CAGCS Winter Seminar a success.



smartphone. Up until then users would use the popular Palm Pilot PDA (Personal Data Assistant) which offered data storage for applications such as address book, calendar, note pad and some limited programs. A user would source the information from the PDA and then type it into his cell phone. This new smartphone basically combined the functions of a PDA and a cell phone.

Later in 2002 Handspring released the Palm OS which featured web browsing, email, calendar, contact organizer and the introductions of 3rd party applications. Sales of these devices by Palm as well as other manufacturers were increasing exponent every year.

Everything changed in 2007 when Apple introduced the I-Phone. It was the first smartphone that featured a multi-change interface which had great appeal to users. Sales exceeded everyone's expectations and even today it is the benchmark in the industry. Currently the 5th generation I-Phone 4S is the newest generation available.

#### Smartphone Apps

When you open the Apple I-Phone Store page, the screen boldly informs you that it now offers over 500,000 Apps. for the Apple I-Phone. It describes these Apps. for " work, play and everything in between".

Apple first offered Apps (Application Software) in 2008. All Apple Apps must be approved and signed off by Apple. This is done for security to prevent viruses and malware. Apple is considered by industry experts to be one of the most secure devices on market. All Apple Apps. must be purchased at the Apple I-Phone Store whether they are free or downloaded for a fee.

The Apps. have diverse functions including games, references, GPS / Navigation and social networking.

Now the Golf Course superintendent can be included as a beneficiary of the smartphone  
*Continued on page 4...*

Continued from page 3... technology. New Apps. can be downloaded which provide tools such as a compass to determine the position of shade throughout the day given any time of the year. University of Georgia associate professor Patrick McCullough along with other staff has developed 4 Apps. that offer photos that allow you match up to various gold course pests. Another App was developed to assist in common calculations.

Here are 4 iPhone Apps. that you might find useful:

**Sun Seeker: Developed by ozPDA, \$4.99**

John Burke of Hartford Golf Club enlightened me about this one and he highly recommends it. The website for this App. describes it as a "3D Augmented Reality Viewer (That one went right over my head). It basically provides a Flat View Compass and Reality Camera" showing the solar path, its hour intervals, and its winter and summer solstice paths. Net result, John knows where the shade is on his greens during the day regardless of what time of the year it is. John indicated this has assisted him in convincing members precisely what selected trees need to be removed to maximize sunlight and not shade on his greens during the morning hours on his course.

**Turfgrass Management: Developed by University of Georgia, \$19.99 / yr. Subscription**

The Apps. website for this subscription describes it as a "comprehensive application that contains practices and information for managing turf weeds, diseases and insects". It further describes that "The application combines information from numerous books on turfgrass science in one complete program that can be used anywhere. The application also features a pesticide database for turf managers to

easily search by common name or trade name for quick information regarding product rates, tolerant turfgrasses, and pests controlled. The databases contains pre- and postemergence herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, plant growth regulators, and spray adjuvants and will be regularly updated with new products, label amendments, and information". The app. features excellent photo shots to assist the superintendent in matching up and identifying the pest. In addition it makes curative recommendations. All proceeds are donated for ongoing turfgrass research at University of Georgia. This App can be also purchased for the Blackberry and Android smartphones.

**Turfgrass Management Calculator (TMC): Developed by University of Georgia, \$5.99**

A turf salesman in Pennsylvania made me aware of this App. and it has assisted him in his productivity and accuracy in working with his customers. The Apps website indicates it was developed for "practioners and students of Turfgrass" offering over "17,000 programmed calculations". The site goes on to describe that TMC "provides quick answers for calibration, conversions, fertilizer applications, irrigation, mowing, pesticide applications and topdressing along with many other practices". It can greatly assist the superintendent with accurate cost projections. It's quite impressive with the quantity of calculations available and how much detail was considered. Again all proceeds are donated for ongoing turfgrass research at University of Georgia.

**Turfgrass Weeds: Developed by University of Georgia, Free Download**

The App. website describes it as a "virtual flashcard application created as a study tool for turf students at the University of Ga. . The App. contains a series of flashcards with snapshot photos with turfgrass

weeds on the front. Tap the screen with the photo and it flips over and lists the weeds common name, scientific name, its family and lifecycle. Turfgrass weeds has a save option to assist in organizing and categorizing weeds."

It's quite obvious that these specific smartphone apps are just the start of what is more to come. I don't doubt there will be more progress specifically for golf course superintendents as private and academic see opportunities. Don't hesitate to check on the Apple I-Phone Store periodically for new apps.

Mike Donahue

USGA Green Section Record Vol.50 (1) January 6, 2012

The University of Georgia of Apps. were developed and edited by Assistant Professor Patrick McCullough, Dept. of Crop and Soil Science along with contributions from F. Clint Waltz, Associate Professor, Dept. of Crop and Soil Science, William Hudson, Professor - Dept. of Entomology, Alfredo Martinez, Associate Professor, Dept. of Plant Pathology.



2012 TURF BOWL

Great showing for the local University Turf Bowl teams at the GIS in Las Vegas.

UMASS's three and UCONN's two turf bowl teams participated in the national collegiate turf bowl competition at the 2012 Golf Course Superintendents Association of America National Conference. There were 87 teams from across the US competing in the contest.

The UCONN teams finished 8th and 22nd overall. This is the first time UCONN has broken the top ten in this competition and the first time we have placed two teams in the top 25. The UMass teams placed 2nd, 11th, and 59th in the Turf Bowl competition.

Pictured in a group photo are the teams listed below. UMASS has the big check. UCONN is on the mower.

**UCONN 8th place team**

Anthony Minniti  
Raymond Platt  
Brian Conlon  
Mike Sargent

**UCONN 22nd place team**

Brandon Fowler  
Travis Nierendorf  
Eli Desroschers

**UMASS 2nd place team**

Royal Healy  
Edward Coffin  
Scott St. Pierre  
Peter White

**11th place team**

Evan Bradstreet  
Christopher Freniere  
Ryan Raposa  
Kevin Shewmaker

**59th place** (one student competing by himself against 4-person teams!)  
Sean Raposa



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# Grass Catcher

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## Congratulations

Glenn Perry, CGCS, Rolling Hills Country Club on his certification renewal through GCSAA

Ishmael Franco, former Asst. Superintendent at The Golf Club at Oxford Greens on his new job as Superintendent at Highland Golf Club.

Justin Gabrenas, former Superintendent at Lake Waramaug CC, on his new job as Superintendent at Birchwood Country Club.

David Ryan, formerly of Madison Country Club, on accepting the position of Golf Course Superintendent at Great Neck Country Club (formerly New London Country Club)

Steve Smith, CGCS, on his new job as The Director of Landscaping at The Casa Marina Resort and The Reach Resort in Key West, FL.

Richard Duggan, formerly of The Patterson Club, on his new job as Superintendent at Lake Waramaug Country Club.

Andrew Hannah formerly class C at Century CC is now Golf Course Superintendent at Shuttle Meadow CC in Kensington, CT.

Dennis Petruzzelli, CGCS, on being named the Superintendent at Woodbridge Country Club.

Stephen Loughran, formerly from North Hemstead CC, Port Washington, LI, now the Superintendent at Rock Ridge Country Club.

## Condolences

Donald Richard Kiley, 85, passed away December 21, 2011. He was born in Chicago, IL on February 25, 1926. Don married the love of his life, Berte on June 25, 1949. During their 62 years of marriage they raised their six children. Don attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor earning a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology. He worked as a personnel manager until his retirement from Monsanto at age of 55. He began a second career as a lobbyist for the Connecticut State legislation. During this time his wife Berte worked along his side. Don enjoyed volunteering at the New England Air Museum in Windsor Locks restoring vintage

aircraft. An avid sailor, patriarch, champion story-teller and wordsmith, Don left a memorable mark on more than a few and shall be sorely missed by everyone who had the privilege to know him.

On the passing of Geoffrey Cornish, Golf Course Architect on February 10, 2012

On the passing of Timothy O'Neill's father, Vincent O'Neill, 83 years old, on March 2, 2012

On the passing of Sean Moran's father, Peter Moran, 68 years old, on March 3, 2012

**Please note!** Anyone who wishes to send out via email information on the passing of a family member must contact the CAGCS business office. The office will not send out an obituary without the approval of the family.

## Reminder

CAGCS Scholarship deadline for requesting an application is Friday, April 6th. Deadline for submitting applications is Friday, May 4th.



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### QUEEN ELECTED GCSAA PRESIDENT

*Kansas City-metro golf operations manager to lead national golf association.*

Sandy G. Queen, CGCS, manager of golf operations for the Kansas City suburb of Overland Park, Kan., was elected president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) at the association's annual meeting March 2 in Las Vegas.

The annual meeting was held in conjunction with the GCSAA Education Conference (Feb. 27-March 2) and Golf Industry Show (Feb. 29-March 1).

Queen has been the manager of golf operations for the city of Overland Park (Kan.) since 1984. Previously, he served as superintendent for the city of Overland Park. A GCSAA member for 34 years, Queen is a member and past president of the Heart of America GCSA, a member of the Kansas Turfgrass Association and The First Tee of Greater Kansas City. He also oversees operations for the award-winning Deanna Rose Children's Farmstead and the Overland Park Soccer Complex, regarded as one of the top facilities of its kind in the nation.

Patrick R. Finlen, CGCS, director of golf course maintenance operations at The Olympic Club in San Francisco, was elected vice president. Finlen

will be the host of the 2012 U.S. Open in June. Keith A. Ihms, CGCS at Country Club of Little Rock (Ark.) was elected secretary/treasurer.

Rafael Barajas, CGCS at Hacienda Golf Club in La Habra Heights, Calif., and William H. Maynard, CGCS at Milburn Golf and Country Club in Overland Park, Kan., were elected as directors. Darren J. Davis, GCSAA Class A member at Olde Florida Golf Club in Naples, Fla., was appointed to the GCSAA Board of Directors, filling the remaining year of Ihms' term, created by his election to secretary/treasurer.

John J. O'Keefe, CGCS, director of golf course management at Preakness Hills Country Club in Wayne, N.J., and Peter J. Grass, CGCS at Hilands Golf Club in Billings, Mont., remain on the board with one year remaining on their two-year director terms.

Robert M. Randquist, CGCS at Boca Rio Golf Club in Boca Raton, Fla., will serve on the board for one year as immediate past president. James R. Fitzroy, CGCS, director/superintendent at Wollaston Recreational Facility/Presidents Golf Club in North Quincy, Mass., retires from the board after serving the last year as immediate past president.

**About GCSAA**  
GCSAA is a leading golf organization and has as its focus golf course management. Since 1926, GCSAA has been the top professional association for the men and women who manage golf courses in the United States and worldwide. From its headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., the

association provides education, information and representation to 19,000 members in more than 72 countries. GCSAA's mission is to serve its members, advance their profession and enhance the enjoyment, growth and vitality of the game of golf. Find GCSAA on Facebook, follow GCSAA on Twitter, and visit GCSAA at [www.gcsaa.org](http://www.gcsaa.org). The EIFG is the philanthropic organization of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, and has as its mission to foster sustainability through research, awareness, education, programs and scholarships for the benefit of golf course management professionals, golf facilities and the game. Visit [www.eifg.org](http://www.eifg.org).

*[CGCS designates Certified Golf Course Superintendent, which recognizes the achievement of high standards of professionalism through education, testing and experience.]*



Sandy G. Queen, CGCS

### DON'T MISS OUT: UCONN TURFGRASS FIELD DAY: 17 JULY, 2012

The Biennial UCONN Turfgrass Field Day has quickly developed into one of the premiere field days in the Northeast. Since 2008, the field day has attracted an average of 300 attendees and 35 exhibitors each year to the Plant Science Research Farm in Storrs. The emphasis of the event is to share current research conducted by the UCONN Turfgrass Team with turfgrass professionals in the region. UCONN's turf faculty provide expertise in a variety of disciplines providing attendees the opportunity to learn about diverse research studies; all of which provide information targeted to improve management of turf in the Northeast. Moreover, you are encouraged to walk the plots to see for yourself what works and what doesn't; a hallmark of field days that can't be duplicated in formal research presentations. This year's event will feature research on:

- Anthracnose management
- Summer patch management
- Dollar spot control
- Fungicide efficacy trials
- Annual bluegrass control
- Biological white grub control
- Organic athletic field management
- Weed control with minimum risk pesticides

- Decision tools to guide nitrogen fertility
- Cultivar evaluations

The agenda for the day will begin with time to visit regional exhibitors and a light breakfast, followed by guided research talks with UCONN faculty. After a barbeque lunch, we will offer an afternoon program (1:30 to 3:00 pm; separate registration required) with the option of participating in one of three pest management workshops.

- Turfgrass Disease Identification and Management Walking Tour – Inguagiato  
Review signs and symptoms of common turfgrass diseases, and discuss current cultural and chemical controls with examples from UCONN fungicide efficacy trials
- Use of Entomopathogenic Nematodes for Insect Management – LeGrand  
This hands-on workshop will review the biology, species selection, handling and application of nematodes employed for insect pest management.
- Managing Weeds in the New (25b) World – Henderson & Wallace. A workshop focused on efficacy of minimum risk pesticides and cultural practices for weed control in K-8 school grounds

In addition to keeping up with the latest research, attendees can also see and hear about new products from local vendors, and

network with other turf managers. Pesticide and GCSAA certification credits will be available for attendees. The timing of this event can present challenges for those during trying summers. However, this date has intentionally been selected to coincide with stressful summer conditions when treatment differences are most apparent in the research trials. While leaving the property at this time may be difficult, it is also the most advantageous time to view the research. We hope you can make it this year, and we look forward to seeing you on Tuesday, July 17 at the Plant Science Research Farm in Storrs, CT. For registration information visit [www.uconn.turf.edu](http://www.uconn.turf.edu).



### HARTFORD AREA SUPERINTENDENT RECEIVES PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

Marc E. Weston, GCSAA golf course superintendent at Indian Hill Country Club, Newington, Conn., has been designated a Certified Golf Course Superintendent (CGCS) by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). Weston, a 14-year GCSAA member, has been the superintendent at Indian Hill Country Club since 2003. Approximately 1,700 golf course superintendents worldwide, currently hold "CGCS" status.

According to GCSAA Chief Executive Officer Rhett Evans, "25 percent of GCSAA's Class A members have elected to earn the highest level of recognition through the professional designation "CGCS" by completion of the GCSAA Certification Program. This program requires their demonstration of a higher set of competencies in golf course management through testing and practical application. Employers can be confident they employ a career professional who will increase their chances of having consistently superior course conditions."

GCSAA was among the first associations to institute a professional certification program, establishing its program in 1971 to recognize outstanding and progressive superintendents. In 2005, GCSAA completed a restructuring of its certification program in order to raise the level of documented professionalism through comprehensive continuing education. The restructured program was recognized by the National Certification Commission as "one of the most extensive and comprehensive certification programs for any profession."

To qualify for GCSAA's new competency-based certification program, a candidate must have at least three years experience as a golf course superintendent, be employed in that capacity and meet post-secondary educational requirements and/or continuing education points. The candidate's knowledge, skills and abilities are validated through the development of a portfolio consisting of their responses to skill statements, case-study scenarios and submission of work samples; an

on-site inspection of their golf facility; and a rigorous six-hour examination covering: equipment, irrigation systems, materials and technology; golf course and grounds; human resources, rules of golf, financial and administrative systems, regulatory and programmatic systems, crisis management, project management and ethics and values. As part of the certification process, an on-site inspection of Weston's golf course operation was conducted by two GCSAA certified golf course superintendents: Scott M. Ramsay, CGCS, The Course at Yale, New Haven, Conn.; and Vincent A. Pavonetti, CGCS, Fairview Country Club, Greenwich, Conn.

Mike Krudwig  
Sales Manager  
CAGCS/GCSAA Member

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**SPRING TURFGRASS DISEASE OUTLOOK**

John Inguagiato, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Turfgrass Pathology, University of Connecticut

You don't need a sophisticated weather station to tell you that this winter has been abnormally warm. However, records generated by these services do help document the story. According to the Northeast Regional Climate Center, temperatures in February were 6 to 7 F above normal throughout Connecticut. Bridgeport experienced a record high average temperature of 38.8 F and Hartford had a near record average of 35.8 F. These above normal temperatures are just the latest of a string of eleven consecutive months with above normal temperatures throughout the region.

As many of you have noticed, the early onset of warmer temperatures has already affected the biological development of many organisms in our environment. Some crocuses began blooming by early February, ticks were actively searching for food, and the grass has started greening up in some areas. Of course, for a turfgrass pathologist these early indications of spring suggest a potentially early onset of disease as well, with turf pathogens also taking advantage of the warmer temperatures. Fortunately, our accumulated precipitation has been slightly below average since December. The limited moisture during late January and February likely explains the absence of Microdochium patch (aka., pink snow mold) throughout the region despite periods of favorable temperatures in the mid-40's F.

Ultimately, the disease outlook for the spring will be dependent on the amount of precipitation we receive. A good analogy I've adopted from Rich

Buckley at Rutgers relates the role of moisture and temperature on disease incidence to an engine. He says, temperature is like the throttle, but moisture is the ignition. This year, the throttle has already started increasing, priming the system; if heavy rainfalls occur this spring that could provide the spark for a particularly difficult disease year. Perhaps most notably might be Microdochium patch and take-all patch this spring, and summer patch later on.

Microdochium patch sometimes catches folks off guard when it occurs in the spring, because it lacks the characteristic pink coloration observed after snow melt. During mild temperatures and high humidity this disease will develop as an orange colored patch with an outer halo of grayish, water-soaked turf, 2 to 6 inches in diameter that may produce abundant mycelium and spores. The spores can be easily spread by flowing surface water and equipment causing a streaking pattern. Control of this disease is recommended particularly on putting greens since it can kill turfgrass crowns and spread rapidly during favorable conditions.

Patch diseases like take-all and summer patch often times can be effectively managed, but cause significant problems when control breakthroughs occur. "Early" springs can be particularly problematic for these diseases if your preventive fungicide applications are based on calendar date rather than monitoring soil temperatures. Effective recommendations have been developed for timing fungicide applications based on soil temperatures for these diseases to protect turfgrasses prior to infection. The take-all pathogen grows in the soil and infects roots during wet conditions when soil temperatures are approximately 50 - 55 F. Symptoms develop later, once temperatures increase and water becomes limiting. A fungicide applied at this time should help minimize infection by the take-

all pathogen. However, as you would expect, this critical temperature threshold may vary from year to year. Calendar based fungicide applications may not coincide with the time when roots are being infected, leading to a failure or reduced efficacy of preventive applications. This could be particularly true in a year such as this when soil temperatures may likely increase more rapidly than normal years. Therefore, an active soil temperature monitoring program is recommended to optimize preventive fungicide applications. Soil temperatures should be measured at the 2-inch depth everyday at 2 p.m. Once temperatures reach 50 F or greater for 5 consecutive days, a preventive application of a strobilurin or DMI fungicide should be made with a follow up 21- to 28-d later. Growth of the pathogen usually slows as temperatures increase so additional fungicide applications during the summer are usually not required.

A similar soil temperature monitoring program is recommended for summer patch. However, this pathogen prefers warmer temperatures of 65 F or greater. Therefore, preventive fungicides should be applied once soil temperatures at 2 p.m. reach 65 F for 5 consecutive days. It is important to observe these temperatures for 5 days to ensure that soil temperatures have actually stabilized and are not just a short term abnormality. Usually 3 to 4 repeat applications of a DMI or strobilurin fungicide every 21- to 28-d are recommended for summer patch control.

This spring and summer, don't let the calendar dictate your disease control programs. These programs, often developed in the off-season with the best information available at the time, cannot predict what will be needed during the heat of the summer (or spring). Allow yourself the flexibility to adjust your fungicide choices to address rising disease threats as they present themselves. Best wishes for this summer!



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**2012 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

<b>April 30</b> Monday	<b>NORWICH GOLF COURSE</b> 2 Ball Shamble	<b>Bruce Morse</b> Host Superintendent
<b>May 1</b> Tuesday	<b>RI TURFGRASS FOUNDATION GOLF TOURNAMENT</b> Rhode Island Country Club, Barrington, RI	
<b>May 21</b> Monday	<b>CLINTON COUNTRY CLUB</b> CAGCS Annual Scholarship & Research Tournament	<b>Michael Decker</b> Host Superintendent
<b>June 12</b> Tuesday	<b>WETHERSFIELD COUNTRY CLUB</b> Low Gross/Net by Flight 1st Round CAGCS Championship MET Team Championship Qualifier	<b>Alan Woodward</b> Host Superintendent
<b>July 10</b> Tuesday	<b>WINTONBURY HILLS COUNTRY CLUB</b> CAGCS Benevolent Fundraiser Low Gross/Net Blind Partners 2nd Round CAGCS Championship New England Team Championship Qualifier	<b>Mark Mansur</b> Host Superintendent
<b>July 17</b> Tuesday	<b>UCONN Turfgrass Field Day</b> Plant Science Research Farm, Storrs, CT	
<b>August 1</b> Wednesday	<b>UMASS Turf Research Field Day</b> Joseph Troll Turf Research Center, South Deerfield, MA	
<b>August 14</b> Tuesday	<b>THE COURSE AT YALE</b> CAGCS Member/Guest	<b>Scott Ramsay, CGCS</b> Host Superintendent
<b>August 26</b> Tuesday	<b>LAKE COMPOUNCE</b> Family Day	
<b>October 4</b> Thursday	<b>REDDING COUNTRY CLUB</b> 2 Person Best Ball Superintendent/Assistant Tournament President's Cup & McLaughlin Trophy	<b>Brett Chapin</b> Host Superintendent
<b>October TBA</b>	<b>Class C Tournament</b>	
<b>November 1</b> Thursday	<b>PINE ORCHARD YACHT &amp; CC</b> 9-Hole Scramble ABCD, CAGCS Annual Meeting	<b>Peter Gorman</b> Host Superintendent
<b>December 6</b> Thursday	<b>J. TIMOTHY'S TAVERNE</b> CAGCS Christmas Party	<b>Peter Gorman</b>



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**SURVIVING AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE**

*Managing a bankrupt golf course back to life can be the ride of a life. BY CLAY PEDIGO*

I didn't think things could get any worse than September 28, 2010. I found out that day that my employer, Oak Lane Golf and Country Club in Woodbridge, Connecticut, would be closing its doors indefinitely on November 1st and I was losing my job a month later.

It was the end of my fourth season as superintendent of the club, and it capped off a demoralizing year for everyone involved. During the previous 12 months the club had shut down its kitchen operation in favor of hiring an outside caterer, had been through three general managers, and had reduced the green department operating budget by 33%. To make matters worse, a severe drought and statemandated water restrictions left most of the fairways decimated from lack of irrigation. Morale, from club members to staff, was very low from the cloud of uncertainty that had hung over us during this time. Members were already searching for new clubs to join, and staff members were forced to deal with early layoffs and no confirmed return dates.

Adding to my anxiety was the weight of losing my job and with it a salary, company vehicle, my family's health insurance (wife and three young children) and the house provided to us. The

club's board of governors informed us we were welcome to continue living in the house while the future of the club and property was being determined, but we always knew there was a chance that we would be forced to leave. For the next two months, I frequently transitioned between feelings of anger, frustration, fear, denial, and disbelief. I was experiencing these feelings while still working full time, navigating through the fall leaf season, and preparing the course for a New England winter.

On November 24, 2010, the day before Thanksgiving, at the urging of my wife and father, I drove myself to the emergency department to have a chest x-ray to determine if I had suffered a broken rib that I had been complaining about for a few weeks. The results were negative for broken bones, but the x-rays detected a large tumor between my upper lungs and pressing against my trachea.

It sounds clichéd, but it is amazing how events in your life can shift your focus from one thing to another. Nine days after losing my job, I had a nearly seven-pound tumor removed from my chest through a large incision in my back. Two weeks later, on Christmas Eve, at the beginning of an uncomfortable recovery, my family received what seemed like the first good news in nearly a year. The pathology results were back and the growth was benign. Suddenly, my future seemed much brighter...

**WINTER OF UNCERTAINTY**

As the winter of 2011 progressed, it became apparent that Oak Lane would never exist in

its previous incarnation. Attempts to find a buyer came up short. Complicating matters was the fact that the club only owned half of the property, which included the front nine holes, the maintenance facility and the house, and leased the other half on which the clubhouse and back nine holes were located. With mounting debt, unpaid back taxes and at least 1.5 million dollars owed on its mortgage, the board of governors and bank chose to place the club-owned property up for auction. The club's landlord agreed to honor the remaining five years that existed on the Oak Lane lease with any potential buyer so the property could be nationally marketed as a golf course.

I remained on site that winter, plowing snow, gathering mail, checking on club grounds and buildings in exchange for staying in the house. Ironically, the fact that Oak Lane had closed its doors in December proved to be helpful for the club, but the worst case scenario for me. I had always felt that if the grass on the golf course were actively growing, there would be an added sense of urgency to get a deal, any deal, done immediately. Instead, with snow mold sprays complete, the irrigation system winterized and snow resting on top of dormant turf, the winter seemed to drag on as we waited to hear our fate.

**A ONE-MAN SHOW**

In early March, the board of governors informed me of the plan to put the club-owned land up for auction. The club, working closely with the bank, would fund a skeleton golf course operation that would end on May 10, auction day. My orders

were simple: do whatever was necessary to present a visually recognizable golf course during the marketing period leading up to the auction and do it for as little money as possible. It was assumed that as of May 11 a new golf course operator would be in control of the property, so I was not to purchase any products that would be needed to maintain the golf course after that date.

Work began seven weeks prior to the auction. I was now an independent contractor being paid at my former weekly salary. The first four weeks I worked alone, but I was able to hire a former staff member for the final three. My first week in late March was spent preparing the equipment for a oneman show, which did not take long, as I had only to worry about one greens mower, a tee mower, and a fairway mower. I would have preferred to replace bearings and seals, grind reels and replace bedknives, but the parts were not available and I settled for back-lapping reels, fresh grease for the bearings, and replacing any filters that remained from the 2010 inventory.

All mowing would be performed on an as-needed basis, which turned out to be every other day on greens, now being maintained at a 0.160-inch height of cut. Tees and fairways were cut one to two times per week at 0.600 inch. The club's rough mower and Buffalo Blower had been repossessed over the winter, so I contracted out for the rough to be mowed twice prior to the auction. A mentor was able to lend me a tow-behind leaf blower that I used to clear the playing surfaces of winter debris.

In order for the golf course to remain presentable for marketing, the greens, tees, and fairways would be my only focus. However, numerous annual practices and chemical applications would either be adjusted or eliminated. The fungicides and chemicals remaining in inventory from 2010 would have to be utilized through the May date. The intermediate rough cut around fairways would be abandoned due to time constraints and a dilapidated mower in need of costly repairs. Spring aeration and topdressing would not be possible for one person trying to keep up with mowing. Repairing the previous year's drought damage also would be put on hold until after the auction date, as would any sand bunker work.

Surprisingly, there were few problems during this interim period leading up to the auction date. When I experienced a problem with equipment, I would either salvage a replacement part off a similar machine or call on some close friends in

the industry to help with repairs. I regarded this seven-week period as an on-the-job tryout for a potential future employer. The golf course and club grounds exceeded most expectations on the May 10 auction day. Approximately 75 people, comprised of former members, townspeople, local politicians, and neighbors, attended the auction with three registered bidders in the audience. The result: the auction was cancelled when it was determined that no one would be making the opening minimum bid of \$1.6 million dollars. The future of the golf course and my family remained uncertain.

**LIMBO**

I was laid off, again, the day after the auction. It also began raining and didn't let up for nearly a week. Rumors circled that there were still some ongoing negotiations behind the scenes. I continued to mow greens, tees, and fairways, even though I was not being compensated and was once again all alone on the golf course. I always believed that, as long as a golf course existed, there was still a chance that I could save my job, my house, and the life my family had in Woodbridge. If the greens, tees, and fairways grew unchecked, as the rough had begun to do, to me it seemed unlikely that a buyer would be interested in investing money in a recovery operation. The quality of cut on most

*Continued on page 14...*

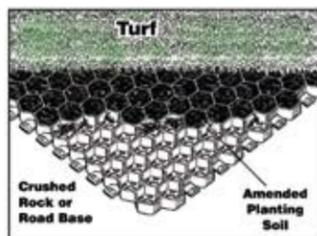


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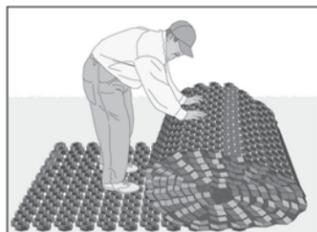
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Continued from page 13...

surfaces continued to decline as the equipment was now in need of reel grinding and new bedknives instead of additional backlapping. I was able to keep greens, tees, and fairways at a manageable, if not shaggy, height, especially in contrast to the actively growing rough. The lack of funds and chemicals meant that several important chemical sprays, including a pre-emergent herbicide for crabgrass, fungicide for summer patch, and an insecticide for annual bluegrass weevils were eliminated, and the results of that were quickly becoming evident.

For two weeks in early June, I was officially brought back to work with three former staff members as the first realistic offer was being negotiated. In vain, we began to mow rough, which was now more than 12 inches high, with an antiquated tow-behind Lastec Articulator. At the end of the two weeks, negotiations with the landlord holding the lease on part of the property broke down, which spelled the end of negotiations with the club as well. The staff of four was informed of the latest layoff simultaneously, as the power company shut off the electricity to our facility.

For the first time since I was initially informed that Oak Lane Golf and Country Club would close, I was finally convinced that the end was imminent. The next day, with mid-June temperatures rising into the mid 80s, summer patch beginning to appear in fairways, the rough now more than 16 inches on at least 12 holes, and an irrigation system crippled by lack of electricity, I knew that my hard work and creativity had taken me as far as I could go. At this point, it was going to

take an operator with startup capital to save any future for the property. I got back on a fairway mower and crossed my fingers yet again...

**THE LAST CHANCE**

Amazingly, two things happened during the last two weeks of June that would prove critical for the survival of the golf course. Timely rain made it completely unnecessary to irrigate. Also, a buyer, Joseph DiNatale, owner of The Tradition Golf Club in Wallingford, Connecticut, and his advisor and restaurant owner of The Seasons at The Tradition, Steve Fontanella, began negotiating with both Oak Lane and its landlord. On June 30, an agreement with both sides was reached, and on July 1, long before any sale closing could occur, The Tradition assumed operation of Oak Lane's golf course. And most important, I will be forever grateful that they chose to retain me as superintendent.

During the next few weeks, we set about playing catch-up to every other golf course in the world. Initially, The Tradition provided staff from their other golf course along with many volunteers who were friends of the new buyer. We began fixing up usable equipment and purchased several used mowers so we could perform routine maintenance once again.

At this point, our three biggest hurdles were the rough, which was now at least two feet high on most of the property, catching up with all the necessary chemical applications, and irrigating the golf course while the lawyers attempted to get power restored to the property. For the first few days, we set every rough mower in our possession to the highest height of cut possible.

Some machines performed better than others, but progress was slow with each one. It seemed there was no quick way to go from 24 inches to 2.5 inches. We were also faced with the problem of removing the clippings. Oak Lane's antiquated leaf sweeper barely met the task. Full hoppers were dumped on cart paths to be removed when time permitted. Progress was slow until a salesman recommended that we look into a Wiedenman Super 500 sweeper with flail blades. We were able to rent the machine, and rough cutting progressed more quickly. One machine was able to do the work that previously required three. When we finished mowing the rough, two-and-a-half weeks later, we had removed more than 550 hoppers of grass.

The pumphouse was a mess! A burglar stole most of the system's copper wire when the course was closed. We had it rewired and retrofitted to accept a 175-kilowatt generator that was brought in to provide power to the pumps. Three smaller generators were used to provide power to the field controllers. Without power in the maintenance facility, the central computer was useless, so irrigation programming was done manually with the field controllers as we monitored system pressure. After the eighth day of operation, an agreement was reached between the power company and the new owners, and we were once again up and running.

When not irrigating the golf course, I attempted to catch up with the basic chemical programs. An insecticide for white grubs was applied on time. Curative fungicide applications were made to suppress summer patch disease, albeit several weeks past due. Oak Lane's annual bluegrass

weevil population was worse than it had ever been. Spot treatments with granular Dyllox provided some short-term results, but feeding damage from newly emerging larva continued and left the perimeter portions of greens in tough shape. By the end of July many of the greens had deteriorated.

Less than \$30,000 dollars had been spent on the property for the first six months of the year. Even though we had begun standard operating procedures on July 1, I had to accept that the lack of normal spring maintenance was coming back to haunt the golf course. An early August opening was postponed when we decided to aerate and overseed the greens to further improve turf conditions. In hindsight, this aeration was performed three weeks too early, even though daytime temperatures dipped into the mid 70s for a few days. While aeration did not provide any immediate satisfaction, it allowed us to introduce more bentgrass seed into the greens.

As we attempted to patiently wait for the greens to mend so we could meet our new opening date of September 1, the weather shifted from high heat and humidity to bring us three major storm events at the end of August. On August 21, a tropical storm pushed through our area, with 6.5 inches of rain recorded at the maintenance facility. The storm flooded Racebrook, the golf course's water source for irrigation, and rising waters engulfed our pumphouse, causing electrical damage to the irrigation pump controls. A key cart path connecting the two sides of the property was destroyed under the flood waters. We quickly repaired the damage in time for Hurricane Irene to pass through on August 28. The 4.5 inches of rain and 70 mph wind gusts knocked down 15 sizable trees and scattered

leaves, sticks, and debris throughout the golf course. Electricity was restored four-and-a-half days later, just in time for a soggy opening day. One more 5-inch rainstorm arrived on September 4 to effectively relegate golf carts to paths only for the first few weeks of operation. We seemed to be cursed!

Eleven months after I had first learned of Oak Lane Golf and Country Club's imminent demise, the Tradition at Oak Lane was now in existence.

**CURRENTLY**

As of this writing (October 2011), things are beginning to feel routine on the golf course. Mowing frequencies for the entire property occur on a more consistent basis. The sale is expected to occur before the end of the month. The clubhouse will need major renovations, including a new roof before winter. The future of the tennis operation is still undecided. The pool will be demolished and never return. It has yet to be determined whether the new business will be a public or semiprivate operation.

Most important, plans are being made for the property for next year and beyond. Tree work, especially around some problem greens, has been scheduled. Old drain lines are set to be replaced.



A continuous cart path will be extended on the back nine. The future looks bright once again.

"Risk/reward" is a term frequently used in golf when evaluating playing strategies. I often viewed the situation my family and I faced as a high risk/ reward opportunity. In our case, there have been a few low-risk/low-reward opportunities that we have passed on during the last year. As it turns out, the risk we took in remaining at Oak Lane has rewarded us with a job working for a wonderful family-run company and the opportunity to continue to live in our community. The reward thus far was worth all the uncertainty and risk!

CLAY PEDIGO is golf course superintendent at The Tradition Golf Club at Oak Lane in Woodbridge, Connecticut.

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